

FDA Commissioner Jane Henney
Dockets Management Branch (HFA 305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fisher's Lane, rm. 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

January 25, 2001

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RE: Docket No. 00D-1598

Dear Ms. Henney,

I am concerned and upset by your new policies that make labeling of genetically engineered (GE) foods voluntary. Even though tens of thousands of people have already expressed their desire for mandatory labeling and the need for safety testing of GE foods, your agency still fails to require these actions. I again am personally urging you to make labeling of GE foods mandatory. This new, voluntary policy is an insult to consumers, and irresponsibly ignores strong scientific evidence of numerous potential health and environmental risks from GE foods.

These foods, simply because they have not been tested, pose serious threats to human health and the environment. GE foods could be toxic, cause serious allergic reactions, cause impaired immune system responses, have reduced nutritional values, and cause irreparable damage to the environment. The agency failed to consider what will happen to human health once these foods comprise a significant portion of our diets. In finding that GE foods are "substantially equivalent" to non-GE food, the agency failed in its duty to protect the American public from the corporate profit motive. And being that they too are part of the American public, I cannot understand why they are making such a hazardous decision. This will effect even them and their own families.

I am strongly opposed to the voluntary labeling policy, which denies consumers a basic right-to-know what is in their food. Without mandatory labeling, neither consumers nor health professionals will know if an allergic or toxic reaction was the result of a genetically engineered food. Consumers will also be deprived of the critical knowledge they need to hold food producers liable should any of GE foods prove hazardous.

We have a right to choose the food that we believe is the most wholesome and safest to eat. Without a mandatory labeling scheme for GE foods and irradiated foods, I will have no way of knowing what is in my food. Or, you in yours for that matter.

Sincerely,

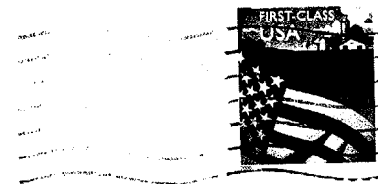


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